

**HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION  
FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
September 26, 2007, 4:30 p.m.  
Council Chambers**

**PRESENT**

Trena Carter  
Ian Kohen  
Greg Lewis  
Tony McClendon  
Akua Ofori-Boateng  
Gil Palmer  
Rosalind Pegram  
John Roberts

**ABSENT**

Jay Myers  
Jason Staley  
John Stroh

**\*\*\* Meeting Called to Order \*\*\***

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Director Arlette Tinsley, Deputy Director Lorraine Smith and Secretary, Lula Young

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:**

Secretary Roberts called roll then requested any corrections or changes to the July Minutes.

**Commissioner Carter moved to accept the July 25, 2007 Minutes. Commissioner Ofori-Boateng seconded. Motion carried.**

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Commissioner Ofori-Boateng reported the Donations account balance of \$6,180.60 as of July 23, 2007. With an expenditure of \$150.00 to BCSC's anti-bullying campaign and a \$50 deposit for the annual dinner, the August 24<sup>th</sup> account balance was \$6,055.60. The September report lists a \$50 annual dinner deposit and a \$382.00 expense for youth/college registration scholarships for the African-American Male National Council (AAMNC) Conference leaving a balance of \$5,723.60, as of September 25, 2007.

**CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:**

Chairperson Palmer announced that Dawn Palmer is the new Director of Multicultural Diversity for BCSC. She welcomes input or suggestions from community members.

Chairperson Palmer reported that both he and Frank Griffin had attended the first Diversity Leadership Council meeting when Dawn was introduced as the Multicultural director. He went on to advise that he was assigned to the academic sub-committee and Frank had possibly been assigned to the recruitment subcommittee.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Director Tinsley reported that a new complaint of sexual harassment in employment was accepted and that a complaint of disability in public accommodation was successfully mediated by former commissioner, Merlyn Bartlett with Commissioner Lewis observing. The mediated settlement included training, a monetary settlement for the complainant and a contribution to the Bartholomew County Medical Society to set up training on reasonable accommodation of persons with disabilities. Director Tinsley informed Commissioners of another upcoming mediation, scheduled for October 16<sup>th</sup> beginning at 9 a.m. and opened the mediation to Commissioners for observation/training.

### **OPEN FORUM – POLICE/COMMUNITY RELATIONS:**

Director Tinsley introduced the Multicultural Liaison for the Columbus Police Department, Officer Brian Wilder. As the liaison, Officer Wilder works with different groups within the community and has been attending G/SA, NAACP and Immigration Issues Forum meetings.

Officer Wilder shared his initiative on several ways he plans to help build a bridge between the African-American community and the Police Department in order to improve relations. Officer Wilder outlined his objectives in the areas of officer and community training, interaction and recruiting. He listed the Citizen's Academy, Police Interaction 102, FATS training (use of force simulator), the Juneteenth celebration, Youth Academy, Teen driving program and Indiana Black Expo (IBE) as a few of the opportunities for interaction and growth. Discussion and questions ensued.

### **ACTION ITEM - INTERNAL POLICY REVISION:**

Director Tinsley directed Commissioners to their copy of a complete compilation of all Commission Policies. She identified one policy involving Sexual Orientation Complaints and recommended that commissioners consider rescinding that policy as it was put in place prior to the passing of the Rules and Regulations amendment that gave staff the authority to accept Sexual Orientation complaints. Commissioner Kohen asked if the policy is rescinded, will any power of enforceability be lost with the deletion of this particular policy. Director Tinsley answered no, since we have the amended Rules and Regulations

**Commissioner Roberts moved to delete the policy, Commission Response to Complaints of Discrimination Involving Persons who are Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or Transgender. Commissioner Lewis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

### **ACTION ITEM – PEACE BANNERS IFFC:**

Director Tinsley reviewed with Commissioners their approval to partner with the Inter-Faith Forum in their endeavor to hang the Peace Banners in City Hall. Director Tinsley requested Commissioners' recommendations on the amount of the financial contribution to support the IFFC. She reminded Commissioners that the approval to hang the banners is a mayoral decision and if approved, the cost to hang the banners is \$500.00. She went on to advise that there would be additional costs if workshops are provided.

Discussion included Commission recommendations to the IFFC to reach out to other groups, with suggestions such as Kidscommons and the Arts Council. Director Tinsley advised Commissioners that she had submitted a request to the mayor for permission to hang the banners.

Commissioners suggested donating up to \$250, and commented that as a goodwill partnership it would be good to provide financial support as the IFFC's goal is consistent with the Commission's message. Discussion ensued.

**Commissioner McClendon moved to table the banner item. Commissioner Roberts seconded. Motion carried.**

**ACTION ITEM: 45<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION:**

Commissioner Roberts updated Commissioners on the work of the Ad hoc committee during their meeting on September 21<sup>st</sup>. He announced the three potential dates for the 2008 annual dinner as April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> and the theme, "Coming of Age in Indiana".

He went on to advise that the committee is planning five speakers garnered from past Laws Award Winners and Commissioners. Each speaker will represent one decade of the Commission's existence. Additionally, past participants of the oral history video will be asked the question, "Imagine Columbus without the Human Rights Commission?" Their responses will be recorded to video-stream throughout the dinner.

Commissioner Pegram provided some background on the essay topic. She referred to the autobiography of Anne Moody, Coming of Age in Mississippi as inspiration for the topic. Discussion ensued

Commissioner Roberts announced committee assignments as Commissioner Pegram will handle the essay topic and Commissioner Carter, the speakers. The Committee's next four meetings will be held on Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, Nov. 9<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Meeting adjourned.**